

Home safety checklist



The Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre, Melbourne 2008

The following list is a general guide only. Every home is different, so some issues will not apply.

By law every home must have at least one working smoke alarm installed on each level of the house. Clean and check your alarms regularly and make sure they are working. Do not deadlock yourself inside the house. Keep keys in the back of the lock or close by.

Please contact the Safety Centre on (03) 9345 5085 for advice on action plans and safety products.

Kitchen	Check	Action
Oven bolted to the wall and floor to prevent it tipping over		
Back burners used on the stove and pot handles always turned away from the front of the stove to avoid scalds		
Never leave cooking, heaters, open fires or candles unattended		
Power point covers fitted to avoid electrocution		
Fire blanket and/or fire extinguisher available in case of fire		
Do not overload power boards		
Electrical appliances unplugged after use		
Keep electrical appliances in good working order. Have repairs done by a registered electrician		
Have a fire extinguisher and fire blanket in the kitchen and know how to use them		
Have a fire escape plan and practise it. Have an agreed-upon meeting place		
Hot drinks should always be out of reach of children to prevent scalds		
Store all matches and lighters out of reach of children		
Hot water in kettles kept out of reach		
Placemats used instead of tablecloths		
Highchair is stable and fitted with a five point harness to prevent serious fall injuries		
Safety gate at the entry to the kitchen while cooking		
Dishwasher closed at all times to prevent poisoning		
All cleaning products kept in a locked cupboard		
Plastic bags kept out of reach of children		
Appliances located within close range of each other, i.e. between sink, stove, fridge and workbenches		
Microwave positioned out of children's reach		

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Bathroom and laundry	Check	Action
All medications and cleaning products stored in locked cupboards		
All poisonous substances kept in their original containers		
Electrical appliances removed from the bathroom		
Nappy bucket has a firm fitting lid and placed off the floor		
Non-slip surface on bath or non-slip bath mat		
Power point covers installed to avoid electrocution		
Children supervised in the bathroom at all times		
Hot water delivered to the bathroom at a maximum 50°C to prevent serious scalds		
Bath taps inaccessible to young children		
Clean lint filters on clothes dryers regularly and always let dryers complete the cool-down cycle		

Living areas	Check	Action
Corner covers on sharp edges of furniture		
All blind cords out of reach to avoid strangulation		
Fire and heater guards securely attached		
Matches and lighters kept out of reach of children at all times		
Heater at least one metre away from curtains or other flammable materials		
Toys stored within children's reach		
A safe and separate play space provided		
Warning labels on toys checked before buying		
Toys in good condition		
Furniture kept away from windows		
Safety glass or shatter-resistant film fitted to low-level windows or glass doors		
Power point covers fitted to avoid electrocution		
Safety barriers on steps and stairs		
Layout and placement of furniture in each room allows a clear pathway to avoid tripping and collisions		
Power boards used instead of double adaptors		

Bedroom	Check	Action
Cots are Australian Standards approved for safer design to avoid serious injury		
Cot mattress fits snugly to avoid entrapment		
No mobiles, bumpers or pillows in cot to avoid suffocation		
Cot away from windows and blinds to avoid strangulation from cords		
Change table fitted with body harness, or baby changed on the floor to prevent serious fall injuries		
No electric blankets on children's beds to avoid fire and electrocution		
'Low Fire Danger' children's nightwear worn to reduce fire risk		
Do not dry clothing too close to heaters		
Ensure cigarette ash and butts are extinguished. Never smoke in bed		
Smoke alarms fitted outside each bedroom with batteries checked regularly and replaced annually. It is advisable that smoke alarms should also be installed in bedrooms where people sleep with their door closed		
Only children over the age of 9 years permitted on the top of an Australian Standards approved bunk bed to avoid serious fall injuries		

Garage and sheds	Check	Action
Locks on garage and shed doors to prevent access		
Poisonous substances kept in original containers		
Paints, flammable liquids and poisonous substances in locked cupboards		
All power tools stored in locked cupboard		
Small objects (e.g. nails, screws etc.) stored up high		
Children not permitted to play around machinery		

Outdoors	Check	Action
Pram or stroller fitted with a five point harness		
Wading pool always emptied immediately after use		
Children constantly supervised near water		
A safe fenced area provided for children to play		
Fence checked regularly and in good condition		
Children encouraged to play in shade, wear hats and protective clothing to avoid sunburn		
Small amounts of SPF30+ sunscreen used on hands, feet and face		
Play equipment checked regularly and in good condition		
Soft surface under playground equipment maintained at a depth of 300mm		
Children always supervised near dogs		
Garden checked for poisonous plants		
No tree branches at child's eye level to avoid injury		

Balconies	Check	Action
Balcony entry points are kept locked to avoid balconies being used as a play area		
Children are supervised on balconies at all times		
Choose heavy furniture, rather than light plastic furniture, and ensure it is positioned away from railings to avoid children moving furniture and using it to climb on railings		
Height of railing at least 1000mm (1 metre), but if balcony is higher than 3 metres off the ground, railing to be at least 1200mm high		
Railing is vertical so children cannot climb railing like a ladder, with gaps between railing no wider than 100mm		
Balcony surface is non-slip to prevent falls, and all tripping hazards removed		

On the road	Check	Action
First aid kit and fire extinguisher checked and kept in car		
Children always travel in the back seat in an Australian Standards approved child restraint		
Child restraints properly fitted and used at all times		
Child safety locks on car doors		
Children always get in and out of the car on the kerb side		
Gate to the road kept closed		
Driveway separated from play areas		
Toddler's hand always held when near a road		
Traffic lights or pedestrian crossings used when available		
Children taught to 'Stop, Look, Listen and Think' before crossing roads		
Helmets always worn when riding bicycles		
Wrist guards, knee and elbow pads, closed-toe shoes and helmets worn when riding skateboards, scooters and in-line skates		

First aid kits

We recommend that all parents and carers are trained in first aid and update their qualifications in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) each year. First aid kits are essential in the home, in the car and when on holidays. Keep a list of contents in the kit to check and restock regularly.

Ideas for contents to include in a first aid kit

The contents of the first aid kit will vary depending on a number of issues. Consider the following:

- The extent of your first aid training and qualifications
- Your confidence and experience in using the contents
- The individual needs of your family
- How far away you may be from emergency services
- The type of activities all family members will be participating in.

Suggested first aid kit contents

The following are suggested items to include in a first aid kit. You can buy a first aid kit or compile your own. For further advice refer to a first aid book or your first aid training provider. Your local doctor or pharmacist should advise on items such as anti-irritant creams, analgesics and antiseptics. Medicines and creams should be stored separately in a medicine cabinet with a child resistant lock.

	Check
First aid reference book and emergency phone numbers/CPR chart	
Pencil and note pad	
Disposable protective gloves	
Resuscitation pocket mask or face shield	
Small hand towels	
Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted widths)	
Individually wrapped sterile non-adhesive dressings (100mm x 100mm)	
Sterile cotton gauze swabs (75mm x 75mm)	
Hypoallergenic adhesive strips and tape (25mm x 2.5 metre roll)	
Small, medium and large size wound dressings	
3 stretch bandages (50, 75 and 100mm x 1.5 metres)	
Triangular calico bandages	
Safety pins	
Rust resistant scissors with one blunt tip (approx. 100mm in length)	
Rust resistant tweezers with a protective guard to prevent tip damage	
Plastic bags (150mm x 200mm) resealable	
Sterile Combine dressing (90mm x 200mm)	
Sterile normal saline solution – single use (100ml container) for eyewash	
Thermometer	
Instant cold compress	
Hot/cold reusable compress	
Butterfly wound closures	
Disposable splinter probes	
Physician's diagnostic pen light / torch	
Emergency blanket	
Packet of tissues	
Disposable drinking cup	
Plastic kidney dish	
Eye pads	
Plastic kitchen film or clean cotton pillowcase to cover burns	

